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6 July 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Comment on "Soviet Goals at Geneva"

1. We agree that the Soviets probably entertain all the goals listed. There is none which we would remove from the list.
2. We think, however, that there is one very important goal omitted, except as it may be intended to be subsumed under one or more of the more general propositions. This is the Soviet purpose to create an atmosphere tending to prevent or delay the rearmament of West Germany. In the memoranda written for you previously we laid great stress on this as the immediate Soviet aim. It is given a similar priority in your comments on NSC 552h.
3. We have some difficulty with the order of relative importance, for the following reasons:
  - a. The first two items are essentially defensive, implying that the Soviets are concerned primarily (1) to overcome vulnerabilities in their control of the satellites, and (2) to gain time to correct their own internal political

DOCUMENT NO. 10  
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NEXT REVIEW DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
AUTH: HR 70-2

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and economic weaknesses. We think control of the satellites is not a very serious problem. We also believe that Soviet internal problems are not so critical as to be the dominating factor in the Soviet approach to negotiations. We prefer to give those Soviet aims which are offensive in character first place in any relative order of importance. (See Paragraph 13 of your comments on NSC 5524.)

b. Some of the goals listed relate to hard power factors, others merely to tactical advantage in the propaganda war. For example, 6 and 9, together with the omitted aim of preventing West German rearmament, are in the first category. Items like 5, 7, and 8 are in the second category. We would prefer not to mix these two kinds of things and would put those relating to power factors at the head of the list.

c. A number of the goals listed represent persistent and continuing objectives of Soviet political warfare, and are not particularly related to Geneva, although of course they will be pressed there also. This is especially true of 1, 2, 4, 8, and 9.

d. For the foregoing reasons, we would place the listed goals in a somewhat different order and would group them in categories

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as follows:

a. Goals whose achievement would alter the balance of military power in the USSR's favor or are primarily "offensive" in character: 6, 9, 3, each of which would relate to the slowing or preventing of West German rearmament.

b. Goals which would give the USSR time to overcome its own problems or are primarily "defensive" in character: 2, 4, 1.

c. Goals which are primarily intended to give the USSR a tactical advantage in propaganda warfare: 5, 7, 8.

5. In two cases, we think the wording is obscure or does not entirely do justice to the Soviet purpose:

a. In 3 it is not clear whether "impetus toward disarmament" means that the Soviets want eventually to make some kind of disarmament agreement or merely want to make propaganda with the subject. We are inclined to think the Soviets are aiming for an agreement, though of course not one that would meet Western requirements, especially on inspection and control.

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b. In 4, on the other hand, we think the propaganda element in the agitation of the trade question is of more consequence than the actual desire for more trade. As demonstrated when COMCON controls were relaxed in 1954, the Bloc's ability to expand trade is very limited.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

SHERMAN KENT  
Assistant Director  
National Estimates

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